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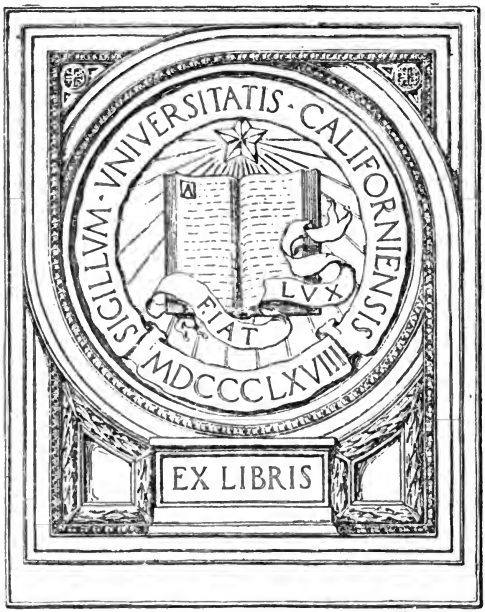
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PAPERS READ

BEFORE THE

LANCASTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

FRIDAY, JUNE 4, 1920

"History herself, as seen in her own workshop."

FORDS AND BRIDGES, ACROSS THE CONESTOGA,
FROM MORGANTOWN TO HINKLETOWN,
By M. G. Weaver.

MINUTES OF THE JUNE MEETING.

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Fords and Bridges, Across the Conestoga from Morgantown to Hinkletown.

COMPILED BY M. G. WEAVER.

We may enumerate the great advantages and note the wealth wrapped up in the powers of the Conestoga, and of the fertility of the soils rendered profitable by it and by its numerous branches in its sixty-mile course; but we must not forget that its flow has always been, and still is, a constant source of inconvenience, has caused the outlay of large sums of money, from time to time, and has taxed the ingenuity of all generations, to provide fords, aqueducts, and bridges, to be of the greatest convenience, to the largest number of people, and to be in keeping with the developments and the march of improvement of our great country. In this paper we will try to open the way for further inquiry and more detailed research, as to how, where, and by whom the Conestoga was first forded and bridged, from its source in the Caernarvons, to the Susquehanna.

Witmer's famous bridge at Lancaster was open for the public, twenty-three years before the first bridge (which was made of wood), long since gone to decay, was erected across the Schuylkill, at the foot of Penn street, Reading.

As early as 1831 the Commissioners of Berks County erected a stone bridge of three arches across the eastern branch of the Conestoga, at what is now Hartz's Mill, on the road leading from Morgantown to the mill and to the extensive limestone quarries and limekilns; a little beyond, and across the hills to Honeybrook, opening into the famous Chester Valley, beyond.

This bridge is just above the confluence of the two branches of the river, across the eastern branch, and, with repairs made thereon in 1910, it looks as the day it was first made. In 1858, the Commissioners of the same county erected two other bridges on the same plan across these same streams, on the course of the old Horse Shoe Road, which connected Lancaster with the Coventry Iron Works as early as 1738. One of them was west of Morgantown, across the western branch, flowing from Bard's Swamp, with one large, high arch; and the other across the eastern branch, east of the town, at Graham's mill, now out of use, with two lower arches. These bridges or aqueducts are built of solid masonry from the sandstones of the hills of this vicinity, and for durability, beauty of architectural design and finish, are not easily surpassed. Marble tablets, with the dates, names of Commissioners and builders, are walled into all these bridges.

The bridges across the Conestoga, down the stream, in their successive order, each have their important bearings on the developments of their respective communities.

The first bridge is on the State Highway, the most direct route from Morgantown across the Welsh Mountains to Honey Brook, just above Hartz's creamery, while the next bridge across the same stream, just below Grube's mill, is on the much-traveled road leading from the Forest Hills, connecting with the same State Road, half way up the mountain.

Another is on the public road leading to the now idle Garman's iron mines. Another, just below the historic mill, which was one of the first mills in the valley, built by John Jenkins, then owned by William Hoar, and now in the third generation of Hertzlers, on the much-used road, leading from the old California Hotel, and forest lands, crossing the river at this place, winding around the first series of hills, to the once famous Shirk's iron ore mines, Shirk's tannery, and crossing the mountain at its highest point in the township. This was the first, and, for a long time, the only road, and good fording place, beside the Coventry Road, and Morgantown fords, for the Conestoga Wagons, laden with the product of this part of the valley, to reach the old Paxton Road, on their way to Philadelphia.

The fords of Upper and Lower Windsor Forges were wide and more dangerous than the others, especially in winter and when the water was strong, during the spring months; and there were many agitations in favor of bridges at both of these places, and for Pool forge conveniences, on the next road below; but the arguments and influences of the taxpayers of the township, and county, for a long time prevailed against the petitioners for bridges, who were divided by three in their claims.

After great changes at the Windsor places, both these fords were bridged, but not until the iron trade had left the valley.

This was the center of activity of the Jenkinses, the life-long home of Robert Jenkins, who was in the Legislature in 1804, and in U. S. Congress from 1807 to 1812, and whose ancestral mansion is still owned and occupied by one of his descendants, Miss Blanche Nevin, between the two old fording places.

Benjamin Weaver, now Bishop of the Mennonite Church, owned most of the water power of Upper Windsor, when the stream was finally bridged.

At Pool Forge is found the first county bridge across the Conestoga in Lancaster County. It is a wooden bridge, built on the Burr plan by Levi Frick, in 1859, it is 83 feet long, nine feet above the water, on the road leading from the old forges and the turnpike, across the mountain, falling in with the Downingtown and Harrisburg turnpike on the summit. While the stream where it crosses the Conestoga turnpike in two parts, only a short distance below this bridge, is now, and for many generations was crossed by the traveling public, by fording, or over two low, plank bridges, not more than three feet above the water. The numerously signed petitions, with lists of names familiar to Caernarvon, not one of whom survives, show that this movement was popular.

All the products of the iron works around Churchtown, going to Philadelphia or to Lancaster, or points between, were carried through one of these nine mentioned fording places during nearly all of the time of their operations.

The next bridge down the stream is also a township bridge, of iron and wood, on the road originally leading from one of the Light, Weaver, News-

wanger and Evans mills (all now removed) to the Edwards plantation, to the west, on the spot which long served as a mark to which the lower owners might swell the waters of their dam. The meadow beyond the bridge was the playgrounds of the boyhood days of Jonas, William and Barton B. Martin, who became well-known business men of Lancaster, it having been owned by their grandfather and father, and is still in the family, owned by a sister, Mrs. Winters.

Bridge No. 2 is of the Burr plan, single span, crossing at the Old White Hall Mills, so named in connection with White Hall Mansion, near Churchtown, both owned by Cyrus Jacobs, and both willed to one of his sons. The bridge was not erected until 1878, when the mill was owned by Isaac Weaver. Through this ford all the thousands of barrels of merchant flour made and marketed from this, the only flour mill ever operated by Cyrus Jacobs, reached the public marts.

Caernarvon deserves commendation for the fact that of the ten bridges within its borders crossing the Conestoga, that township built eight, and maintains seven thereof, and they are all substantially built with cement and iron, except two.

Beyond the limits of Caernarvon there exists in the county, today, only one township bridge, across the Conestoga at Henry Martin's old saw mill, in East Earl (now John Z. Martin's), on the road leading from Terre Hill to the Weaverland road. It was substantially repaired and rebuilt by private subscription and the supervisors of the township in 1916.

In the minute book of the County Commissioners, No. 1, on page 109, August 9, 1753, is the following entry:

"And on the same time they agreed to build two stone bridges, One over the tail race of William Douglass's mill, in Caernarvon Township, on the Provincinal Road, leading to Windsor Furnace, and the other over Conestoga Creek, on the Provincinal Road, leading from Lancaster to the city of Philadelphia."

This last named place was where the well-known Witmer's Bridge now spans the river, but just where William Douglass' tail race crossed the Provincial Road, in Caernarvon, is not known, but it was somewhere on the Pool Forge Farm, as William Douglass and Edward Davis bought a part of that farm from Gabril Davis, several years before these minutes were entered. Afterwards William Douglass bought other land nearby, on a branch of the Conestoga, on Lancaster Road, and afterwards the same tracts were handed down, successively, to Edward Hughs, James Old, Davis Old, Cyrus Jacobs, Hansom H. Jacobs, Jacob Jameson, Israel Blight, James DeHaven and Martin DeHaven, the present owner of a large part of Pool Forge Farm.

The Provincial Road was not on the present bed of the State Road, or old Conestoga pike, at this place, but was farther south; and while the tail race extended to and partly across the Pool premises, the mill may have stood across the line on the Windsor premises. But, so far as as yet been discovered, the bridge was never built, owing to the erection of several new dams soon after that date, and to the development of the iron trade, which caused the mill on these premises to be discontinued, and because of the change of the course of this and other roads, in, about and leading to and from Bangor Churchtown.

The Douglasses were no doubt closely connected with the Davies, and with the erection of Bangor Church, as the names E. Davies and I Douglass are carved on one stone on the east wall of the church, with many other names in the same wall.

The first bridge spanning the Conestoga, in East Earl, is the one crossing the swelling mark of Spring Grove Forge Dam, which reached to this point, when Cyrus Jacobs stopped the onward flow of the river, in 1798, by building a large breast across the bottom lands, half a mile down the stream from this place, and erected his forges between the breast and the old fording place below. The river above the dam was crossed by fording, and by township bridges, until 1898, when an iron bridge, No. two and a-half, 76 feet long, was erected by the county.

The next bridge, No. 3, is a Burr plan structure, built in the fall of 1872, and is 120 feet long, at Spring Grove mills, now owned and operated by Weaver W. Hurst. It was built to take the place of a wooden township bridge, which had done service at this place for some time. This place was mostly developed by Thomas Edwards, David Morgan, Cyrus, Samuel O. and William B. Jacobs, until it became the most extensive old-time charcoal forge on the Conestoga. In 1866 it passed into the hands of Peter Zimmerman and Joseph Oberholzer, who erected a large merchant mill on the site of the old forge.

The agitation for bridges at this place and over the ford on the next road below was long, and at times waxed rather warm, and the reason why this building was deferred so long was because the fording on the lower road, which had the distinction of being a State Road since 1822, leading from the Lancaster and Morgantown turnpike to Reading, had a substantial county bridge in 1846; and by private enterprise of the Jacobses and other influences a township bridge was erected and maintained at Spring Grove soon after that time.

One of the arguments in favor of the lower road bridge was that the volume of water was much greater there, by reason of the inflowing of Cedar Run, a strong mountain stream rising at the foot of the Welsh Mountain, and which often becomes a raging torrent of itself; while at Spring Grove, at the time when both hammers were operated in the forges, more than half and sometimes nearly all of the water flowed down the tail races; thus dividing the depths and the dangers of fording the stream.

Bridge No. 4 was a reality twenty-six years before the county bridge at Spring Grove.

Among the several petitions for bridges at these two fords there is one for Spring Grove, dated February 5, 1841, which, together with the favorable report of the viewers, reviews the fact that the ford is often dangerous, and at times can not be crossed for several days at a time owing to floating ice and spring freshets, and that there is no bridge crossing the river between this place and Morgantown, a distance of seven miles, to the eastward; and only one bridge westward across the same stream between this place and Hinkletown, at the Harrisburg and Downingtown pike, a distance of six miles, excepting an insecure, unsafe bridge at Martin's, formerly Sensenig's, mill.

Therefore, 1841 found the Conestoga turning the wheels for fourteen mills, as many saw mills, and four forges, from Hinkletown eastward, a distance of thirteen miles, and only one bridge of any sort between the Hinkletown bridge and the bridge south of Morgantown, for the convenience of crossing from one side of the stream to the other, of the hundreds of great Conestoga Wagons, loaded with the products of the farms, charcoal, iron, and the mills. These conditions must have lasted several years longer, as Baltzer Snader, a man now past 88, residing near Center Church, distinctly remembers carrying the only mail from Bowmansville, in Brecknock township, to Blue Ball, on horseback, every Friday morning, and back by way of Klauser's store, now Terre Hill. He went by way of the State Road, or Weaver's Mill Ford, where his horse liked to drink, and returned across the rickety bridge at Martin's mill, on his way to Terre Hill.

These mail-carrying trips may seem to have no connections with the subject, but it may be of interest to add that when young Snader wished to make an early start he went to the starting place of his mail route, Bowmansville, the evening before, and brought the mail bag to his home, which was a mile on his way, and made an early start, and could return to his home correspondingly earlier.

The first viewers to make a favorable report for a bridge at Weaver's, now John W. Burkholder's, mill, known as No. 4, was made ten years before its erection; the petition which was fruitful of its building was, among many others, signed by Hon. William Heister, who had represented the county in Congress from 1831 to 1837, and by Hon. Anthony E. Roberts, who afterwards filled the same place from 1855 to 1859.

The State Road was the thoroughfare for great traffic between New Holland, Blue Ball and a large section of farming country, in connection with Reading; the palatial home of the Kitteras' was a mile beyond this ford to the north; they worshipped with the Presbyterians at the Pequea Meeting House, beyond the Welsh Mountains; and every time they attended divine worship, or took their products to the markets, by way of the great roads lying to the south, they crossed this ford; the Hon. Jonh W. Kittera, member of Congress, from 1791 to 1801, no doubt received the foundation of his earlier education in the school connected with that congregation, and often used this fording place to and from his home. And across the same ford he followed the remains of his parents and brother to their last resting place at Pequea. He sold the farm to Michael Kinzer, whose great-grandson, J. Roland Kinzer, and brothers still retain a part thereof.

The Lutherans and the Reformed congregations had their places of worship at New Holland, on the south side of the river, and at Bergstrasse, Center and Muddy Creek, on the north; the Mennonites had a meeting house at Weaverland, on the south side, and one each at Bowmansville and in the Turkey Hill district, on the north side. This fact may have had its influence on the building of bridges.

The Edwards, Olds, Jacobs, Hambrights and others adhering to the Episcopal Church, being principally of Welsh and English extraction, residing mostly on the north side of the river, needed no fording nor bridges to attend divine worship, at Bangor, nor to reach the chapel services at Spring

Grove; nor did they cross the river with their dead, to reach the cemetery at Churchtown, or the old Welsh graveyard, near Terre Hill.

The next crossing is easily effected by the township bridge before mentioned, which takes the place of two fords, the one being at the boyhood home of the late A. W. Snader, Esq.

Bridge No. 4½ as a single arched, wooden structure, at Wayne H. Gehman's mill, on the road leading from Blue Ball to Terre Hill, which place had the first bridge between Hinkletown and Morgantown. But there was no county bridge there before A. D. 1881. The mail carrier, Baltzer Snader, referred to before, distinctly remembers that the first bridge here was so unpopular among many teamsters and horseback travelers that they refused to drive or ride over it, but used the ford below the bridge.

But why was this place singled out for the convenience for a bridge long before any other place along a thirteen-mile stretch of creek?

May these be the reasons? The Great Road, from Lancaster to Coventry and thence to Philadelphia, and the Paxton Road, just a little farther south from this place, were the only openings to the eastern markets for the valley, along the foot of the hill, which is now crowned by the busy borough of Terre Hill, and in the sloping valley towards this ford, northward, were nestled about a dozen fine farms, mostly settled by the Overholzers, who had intermarried with the Weavers and the Landises. The Kiteras had another farm at the west end of the hill-slope, and the Galts and several other Presbyterian neighbors held a large portion of the rich farming lands southwest; the surplus products of this section, as well as the products of the country farther north, all poured across the river towards the best markets, at this place. Then there were at one time five distilleries in operation along the foot of this hill. The Overholsers and the Weavers worshipped at Weaverland, and buried their dead near that place; while the Galts and the Kiteras worshipped at Pequea, and were interested in the formation of a small congregation at Blue Ball, which resulted in the building of the Cedar Grove Presbyterian Church, about 1788 or 90, and this was the natural and easiest place of concentration for all these parties to cross the river, for their various destinations, and as the generations succeeded one another, they became the more interested in this particular crossing, and consequently the first bridge was here erected.

Bridge No. 5, at Eli W. Martin's mill, is a cement bridge, which took the place of the iron bridge, moved farther up the stream, which was first erected in 1870, at what was then Rupp's mill, over the old ford, which was on the public road leading from the farm of Captain Henry Hambright, west of Terre Hill, to this place (now Martin's mill station, on the Terre Hill trolley road), and which crosses the stream just above the mill on its own structure.

Nos. six, seven and eight are wooden, shingle-covered bridges. No. 6 was built in 1886, at what was then Daniel Overholzer's mill, afterwards Nolt's electric light plant, and formerly for many years Galt's grist and merchant mill, one of the early mills in this community.

No. 7, on the road leading from Martindale to New Holland, near Isaac Sensenig's old clover mill, where a bridge was badly needed long before the first house of the busy village was built, was erected in 1857. The petitioners say the fording was extremely dangerous and deep.

No. 8 is a wooden bridge, at the mill and famous " Binder Tongue Carrier " factory of John S. Kurtz, long known as Bear's mill, but to the older inhabitants known as the Christian Sensenig mill. Here his sons, Levi and George Sensenig, grew to manhood, but came to Lancaster in 1867, and were long and favorably known to the live stock trade and in political circles of the county. Here, while Isaac Bear owned the mill, during the Centennial year, after many hotly contested questions and views and reports as to the propriety of a county bridge, agitated by the Sensenig's, long before the Civil War, a wooden bridge was erected and is still doing good service.

The iron and steel bridge spanning the Conestoga at Hinkletown, on the old Paxton Road, more familiarly known as the Harrisburg and Downingtown turnpike, later as the Clay and Hinkletown pike, has a varied history; the first bridge here was erected and thrown open to the use of a grateful public, principally by the efforts of a single individual, George Hinkle, an innkeeper and farmer in that village, sixteen years before Binkley's, and eighteen years earlier than Witmer's famous bridge was open for traffic.

Here, where the Paxton Road, which was laid out from the Susquehanna to Downing's mill, in 1736, crossed the Conestoga, Mr. Hinkle owned a large tract of land, lying on both sides of the stream, and on both sides of the road, and lived with his wife and family of small children, conducting a hotel on the north side of the river, and on the east side of the road. The road was much used, and the fording place was wide, and, being only a short distance below the confluence of Muddy Creek, was rendered difficult and extremely dangerous by spring freshets, floating ice, or by summer rains; and Conestoga Wagon teams and travelers from a distance were often detained for days at a time on either side of the stream.

This inconvenience to the traveling public, many narrow escapes, and several drownings of those who risked themselves into the raging torrents before the eyes of the enterprising innkeepr, spurrd him on in the path of more and lasting service to his fellow man, and he accordingly went to the work of erecting a bridge of wood and stone across the stream, with the abutments and the approaches to the bridge on his own premises, east of the old fording place.

The exact year when the bridge was started or finished is not yet known, but by a deed, dated March 26, 1772, and recorded in the Recorder's Office at Lancaster, in Deed Book P, on page 248, we learn, by a long recital, that George Hinkle, of Earl township, Lancaster county, of the Province of Pennsylvania, innkeeper, had erected a bridge across the Conestoga, in the township aforesaid, "Where it joins the great road, where the said road crosses the said creek, leading from Philadelphia to Paxton Township, in said County, on his own private property, and that the public were not included in its use without special license to and from the said George Hinkle." The convenience and great usefulness of the bridge was represented by the Justices, Grand Jury, and Commissioners, and it was "Resolved, That the said George Hinkle should be paid for the erection of the bridge, and for the ground covered by the approaches thereto, and upon which the abutments rest."

The report was signed by Emanuel Carpenter, Caleb Johnson and James Cuningham.

Therefore, for and in the consideration of the sum of one hundred and forty-four (144) pounds, he transferred and conveyed the bridge and all its belongings and approaches to Adam Orth, Casper Sheaffer, the younger, and Thomas Clark, Commissioners of Lancaster County, and the inhabitants thereof, and all others, His Majesty's subjects, passing and re-passing over the same.

In 1795, the following petition was presented to the Judges of the Courts of the General Quarter Sessions, for Lancaster County:

"We the undersigned inhabitants of Earl Township, in said County, dwelling near Hinkletown (so called), do certify that the bridge erected many years ago, across the Conestoga Creek, near the place aforesaid hath been for several years previous to the erection of the dam and mill near the same creek, by Jonathan Hinkle, in a decaying state, and that said bridge, though a County property, hath in former years, often been repaired by small subscriptions and the exertions of the neighborhood, without any charge to the county. But that the wooden works of the said bridge ought now to be build up anew; hence it will require considerable expense, and there is every reason to apprehend that unless the said bridge is timely repaired by the County Commissioners some accident will happen to persons crossing it. We therefore beg the interference of the Court to take order thereon. We further certify that the said bridge by natural wear and tear, causes the situation in which it now is, and that in our opinion the bridge hath not suffered any damages by reason of the mill and dam aforesaid, save only that the washing of the dam at the entrance of the bridge, the abutment thereof hath been damaged. But that we were lately eye witnesses that since the last rain, and consequent high floods, Jonathan Hinkle hath halled a considerable quantity of stones and filled up the damaged places in a manner now altogether passable."

Then, again, in another petition, dated August, 1798, numerously signed by influential men over the eastern end of the county, the petitioners say, "George Hinkle, of Earl township, now deceased, during his lifetime, to the best of some of the petitioners remembrance, between thirty and forty years ago, undertook by subscription of the neighborhood to build and finish a bridge across the Conestoga, upon the Paxton Road, near the place called Hinkletown, in Earl Township, and by deed executed March 26, 1772, conveyed the same to the County of Lancaster"

If the bridge was built over thirty years before 1798, it must have been built before 1768, possibly about 1760.

One year later, May 30, 1799, John Bitzer (miller), having built a mill dam close to, and across the said bridge, by reason of which the abutments and casings on both side of said bridge were greatly damaged, he made a binding agreement to protect the same, and to repair it when necessary, and gave a heavy bond to do so. Recorded in Book E, Volume 3, on page 355, in the Recorder's Office.

But the abutments were built better than they knew, as they bore the old bridge to 1837.

George Hinkle died in the prime of life, at the age of 51 years, on March 13, 1778. His remains rest in the beautiful cemetery belonging to Bergstrasse

Lutheran Church, of which he was an influential member, and which spot overlooks the Conestoga Valley. He left a widow, Barbara Hinkle, several married daughters, and also four sons, under the age of 21 years. His will, dated July 10, 1777, is on record in the Register's Office, Deed Books, PP, pages 197, 330, 334, 335 and 528, and RR, pages 505 and 597, and UU, page 437, and Volume 5, on page 377, will give proof of his influence in the community.

The old bridge, with its several seiges of repairs brought about by many petitions, lasted until 1837, when its location was changed, to the site of the present structure. It was then replaced by a wooden Burr plan bridge, with two arches, and a walk for pedestrians at the side. Afterwards it was increased to three arches, and the space for sidewalk was thrown into the driveway space, giving room for two carefully driven teams to pass each other.

In 1835, a numerously signed petition for a new bridge at Hinkletown was presented to the Court, and on January 12, 1836, Richard Heitler, Esq., John Gross, innkeeper, John Wilson, Esq., Roland Diller, Esq. (who wrote the report), Gabril Davis, and Isaac Swope, were appointed viewers as to the necessity of the same.

Their report was rather long, and stated that the old bridge was too narrow, dangerous and unsafe, that in times past there was much damage done and also many lives lost because of its unsafe condition, and they recommended that the new bridge should be placed farther down the stream, below the mill, and the approaches to the same be correspondingly changed. They add that they believe this was the original location of the road.

Their recommendations were adopted and their report confirmed, and the erection of the new bridge was begun in 1837, but, when it was finally inspected in 1839, it was found that the longest span, of two hundred feet, had sunken seven inches, owing to the removal of the false or preliminary stays, before the shorter arch or span, of one hundred feet, was completed, pushing the one abutment, upon which the two arches rested, northward. No fault was found with the manner of construction nor the material used, which were according to specifications, but for a precautionary protection to the public, an extra pillar was erected under the long span, and the arch was raised. The structure stood and did good service for fifty-five years, when, in 1896, it was replaced by the present beautiful and substantial iron and steel bridge, 288 feet long, with a plank driveway sixteen feet wide, seventeen feet about the low water mark, and 331 feet above sea level.

With the petition of 1836, still remaining in the Office of Quarter Sessions, are filed several letters or petitions of information, urging the building of a new bridge, the writers giving their several reasons, principal among which were that they knew of their own knowledge that in 1799, when John Swar's team and carter (meaning the driver) were drowned, and that afterwards, John Wolf's team fell into the dam, and that a team from Harrisburg went over the bridge, and one horse was drowned, the water being high, and that afterwards, Isaac Davis, going across the bridge in a gig, his horse took fright, and shoved the gig against a tree on the east side of the bridge, which saved horse, gig and man from falling into the dam; that the last instance

happened last fall (1835) when Jahoe Fassnacht was going to cross the bridge, in a carriage, with his wife, a young baby, her mother, and a younger sister, they got into the stream, and went down the current, and the wife and baby were drowned, but the others and the horse were saved.

The report was accompanied by a neat draft, showing the situation of the old bridge, the new location, the location of the mill and of the hotel which was built by the Hinkle. The house is in good repair and is a fair sample of masonry work a century and a-half ago.

The greater part of the information here noted and compiled was gathered from the public records at the Court House, but we feel especially indebted to Deputy Clerk of Quarter Sessions Court J. M. Groff for valuable assistance rendered in the search for bridge records, and to Mr. George Bard, who resides in his palatial home, with his family, in the quiet village named after George Hinkle, where he was born in 1837.

George Hinkle should be regarded and remembered as a great public benefactor (and his last resting place might with propriety be so marked), for having contrived and erected what we believe to have been the very first successful bridge across the Conestoga anywhere.

Every day, for many years, heavily laden Conestoga Wagons, to and from Philadelphia, from the the hundreds of farms of northern and western Lancaster County, and from the counties beyond the Susquehanna, and to Pittsburgh, from the eastern seaboard, poured across this bridge, their owners having studied their routes so as to cross the Conestoga at Hinkletown; this brought many a weary pilgrim and carter with his large team to enjoy the accommodations of this old wayside inn, of George Hinkle. It was afterwards conducted by his widow, Barbara Hinkle, their son, George Hinkle, in turn by his widow, Susanna Hinkle, and afterwards by the Youndts for many years. So great was the overflow of guests at this place that two houses of a similar character were opened on the opposite side of the stream, in eastern Hinkletown, for them.

The lumbering wagons and carts with their loads of wounded and sick soldiers from Brandywine, Germantown and Paoli, on their way to Ephrata and Lititz, in the fall and winter of 1777 and '78, rolled smoothly over this, the only bridge in their weary journey over the valleys and hills of Chester and Lancaster counties.

The common fellowship and the ingenuity of man caused the streams, chasms, ravines and rough places to be spanned by bridges, not for any narrow-minded desires for gains, but from the earliest history of these achievements to the present time, the comfort of the strangers who cross our borders was always considered, as well as the welfare of the neighbors who resided on the opposite side of the stream.

By these unselfish devotions, the common brotherhood of man, and the results of its fullest development, have been exemplified along the banks of the Conestoga, to the enduring credit of those who have long ago crossed their last stream.

New Holland, Pa.,
May 31, 1920.

Minutes of the June Meeting.

Lancaster, Pa., June 4, 1920.

The regular monthly meeting of the Lancaster County Historical Society was held in the Society's auditorium, in the A. Herr Smith Memorial Building, this evening, at the regular time. Mr. H. Frank Eshleman, officiated.

The minutes of the May meeting were read and approved. The Treasurer's report showed the amount in the treasury on date to be $202.77, and is as follows:

May 7, Balance on hand	$142.77
Receipts	60.00
June 4, amount in treasury	$202.77

(Signed.) A. K. HOSTETTER, Treasurer.

The Librarian reported the following donations and exchanges received during the past month:

A fac-simile of the American Weekly Mercury, Vol. 3, 1721–1722, republished by the Colonial Society of Pennsylvania; a gift from Miss Lillian Evans, of Columbia.

A number of old newspapers from the Watts de Peyster Library at Franklin and Marshall College.

The Constitutional History of the Louisiana Purchase, from the University of California.

The 1918–1919 Report of the Grand Rapids Public Library.

The Official Record of the Indian Conference at Syracuse, March 6–7, 1919, from the Onondaga, N. Y., Historical Association.

Revolutionary Soldiers of Onondago County, N. Y., from the same donor.

An old Steinman Account Book, from H. C. Shenk.

Photograph of the will of Baltzer Maurer, from Harold Weaver Mowery.

Large map of Lancaster Countey, dated 1852, from Mrs. A. K. Hostetter.

The report was accepted and the Secretary ordered to send the thanks of the Society to each donor.

The following applicants proposed for membership at the May meeting were elected: Michael K. Stauffer, Professor E. K. Hibshman, Charles Schlossman, and Miss Emma M. Bolenius.

New applications for membership, June 4:

Miss Stella W. Oster, 128 East Lemon street.

Levi B. Huber, R. F. D. No. 5, Lancaster, Pa.

Harry N. Nissley, care Union National Bank, Mt. Joy, Pa.

Miss Marie P. Orr, 31 North Lime street.

Miss Sara E. Hoak, 29 East James street.

These applications, under the rules, were held over for final action until the next regular meeting.

A letter from Mr. George S. Franklin, in response to the resolutions sent by the Society in memory of Mr. George Steinman, was read by Mr. Hostetter.

A letter from the Minnesota Historical Society, asking for a complete file of our publications, either as an exchange or on any other basis, was referred to the Librarian to investigate what they have to give as an exchange for our very valuable publications or whatever terms other than this were commendable.

A communication from the War Department, Graves Registration Service, Cemeterial Division, was read. It stated that the Department was preparing an authentic narrative of the Graves Registration Service during the World War, and desiring to ascertain what, if any, organized service of this nature was rendered during the various wars in which our nation was involved—Revolutionary, Mexican, Civil—under auspices other than the Graves Registration Service, called upon this Society to furnish any information it could on this subject. The letter was referred to Mr. D. F. Magee for investigation as to what could be done, if anything, in answer to their request.

A letter from Mr. Daniel Gibbons, of New York, stated that his sister, Mrs. O. D. Brubaker, of Bird-in-Hand, wished to present a portrait of the late Hon. Joseph Gibbons, one of the workers in the underground railway, to the Society if the Society desired to have it. The Society voiced its pleasure at the gift and instructed the Secretary to write accepting the donation with the appreciation and thanks of the Society.

Mrs. Mary N. Robinson offered to present to the Society, if the Society desired to have it, a spray of edelweiss plucked from the Alps by President Buchanan. The Society gratefully expressed its pleasure and accepted the donation with appreciative thanks.

The subject came up for discussion as to what should be done about the Society's publications, as the newspaper heretofore publishing the periodicals has recently changed ownership. A number of members took part in the discussion, and it was decided to appoint a committee to see what could be done on a purely business basis—the committee to call upon the various publishers of the city to inquire for the best terms. The chair appointed D. F. Magee, Miss Martha Clark, L. B. Herr, A. K. Hostetter and Hon. John H. Landis to take up this matter at the earliest opportunity. The committee was given power to act upon its own assurance as to what was best to be done.

The business affairs of the Society being finished, the paper for the evening was announced: "Fords and Bridges Over the Conestoga from Morgantown to Hinkletown," by Mr. M. G. Weaver, of New Holland. The paper was very interesting and instructive and received warm praise and appreciation from all who heard it. A vote of thanks was unanimously given to the author and the paper was handed over to the proper committee for further action.

ADALINE B. SPINDLER, Secretary.

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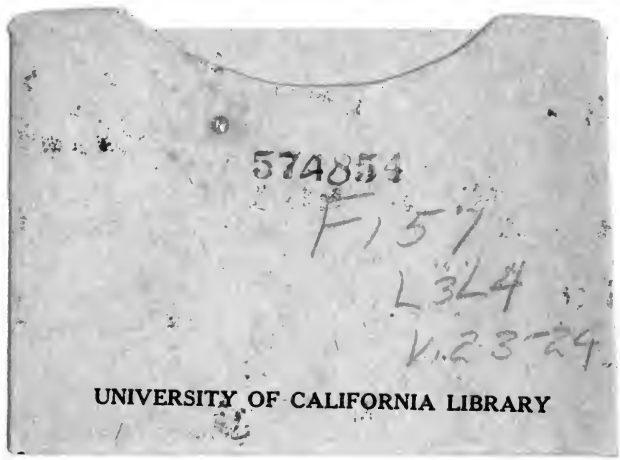
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